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In This Issue

- What is YCM
- Who is involved
- Benefits of YCM
- Benefits for Communities
- Outcomes
- YCM News
- Case Studies
- Get in touch

What is YCM

Young Community Mediators is an exciting new EU Erasmus+ project established with the purpose of equipping young people with the knowledge and skills to become peer to peer mediators, empowering the youth of society to play a greater role in addressing conflict in the community around them thus helping to create a brighter future.

Led by Roscommon LEADER Partnership, Ireland, the Young Community Mediators Project brings together partners from...

- Spain – (FAASE-Fundacion Nuestra Senora Bien Aparecida)
- Northern Ireland – (EBE-East Belfast Enterprise)
- Romania – (Amicii Colegiului Petru Poni)
- Slovenia – (Drustvo SPES)
- Ireland – (Roscommon LEADER Partnership)



Project Partners pictured at the kick off meeting in Roscommon



OVERALL BENEFITS OF YCM

Providing young people, community leaders and educators with convenient and effective training to address the issue of conflict within the community.

Offering clear guidelines on strategies which offer the best solutions to achieving more harmonious communities.

Presenting our training in a relevant and user friendly format.

BENEFITS FOR COMMUNITIES

The Young Community Mediators project will provide young people with the knowledge, skills and experience to address conflict in a socially responsible manner. However, there are additional benefits of the program for the individual and wider community on both a local and international scale.



- Provides a relevant service which equips young people to address challenges in a dynamic society.
- Contributes to social cohesion and in the long term, economic development.
- The YCM Regional Alliance structure will provide a permanent forum for stakeholder collaboration for peer-to-peer youth mediation; ensuring greater continuity in addressing conflict.
- Provide a toolkit which can be applied internationally to catalyse similar improvements in youth led community mediation in other regions.



OUTCOMES

Through enhancement of the quality and availability of youth services and non-formal education, the communities involved with YCM will experience an increase in social and knowledge capital. The YCM project will empower young people to act as leaders of change; building relationships leading to an increase in personal and community wellbeing as more disputes are settled peacefully and less escalate into antisocial or violent acts.



Benefits

- Hundreds of young people (16-30 yr. olds), the majority from disadvantaged backgrounds will acquire knowledge and skills to settle disputes peacefully in schools and neighborhoods, widening their own confidence, responsibility and skills ultimately useful for employers, and contributing to the wellbeing of those around them

YCM NEWS

We are working to establish 5 YCM Regional Alliances, bringing together key youth sector and community based organisations and social policy stakeholders to explore best practice in delivering and facilitating a new young community mediation programme.

YCM Regional Alliance in Ireland

Ireland held its first Regional Alliance Meeting on Thursday 23rd June 2016. The Region consists of counties Roscommon and Leitrim. The focal point for this meeting was a discussion on existing and emerging youth initiatives in our region, their remit, gaps and opportunities. Another important discussion was the development of the project course curriculum content amongst Regional Alliance members. Going forward, members were asked to complete a list of existing and emerging initiatives in our region. It was also suggested that members of the alliance consider the subjects most appropriate to include in the course curriculum before the next Alliance meeting scheduled for the 8th September 2016. Those interested in getting involved in the Irish Alliance or indeed the other country Alliances please email admin@youngcommunitymediators.how



SOUTHWARK COMMUNITY MEDIATORS

The teen go-betweens by Nicola Pocock

Young people are often seen as the cause of antisocial behaviour in communities. But Nicola Pocock, one of the Southwark Youth Mediators, who act as conflict peacemakers, says they can be the solution too. Nicola Pocock (top left): "The youths we help in conflict situations would otherwise face criminal convictions and victims would continue to suffer." Photograph: Southwark Youth Mediators

"I became a volunteer youth mediator in October 2006 whilst attending Bacons College sixth form; a secondary school in Rotherhithe, south London. It all started when the Dave Walker, coordinator of Southwark Mediation Centre, delivered a presentation to all of the sixth-formers in an assembly inviting us to apply if we were interested in becoming mediators.

At the time my ambition was to become a police officer and I thought that mediation would help me develop skills I would need in the force. Every day the news bombards us with negative images, actions and consequences of young people in conflict. I wanted to show that young people could have a positive involvement in conflict as well.

Once I had handed in my application, I was contacted by Southwark Mediation Centre (SMC) and told that I had been shortlisted for an interview. Later that week I was contacted again by SMC saying that they had thought my interview went really well and that I had got through. I couldn't stop smiling; getting that place meant so much to me.

I was selected with 17 other young people in the sixth-form and we did a week of training in mediation skills. Following this we set up a mediation project in the school offering more than 1,200 pupils at the school the opportunity to use our service to resolve their conflicts. Once SMC realised how successful we were, they took the process a step further. Now, as well as working in schools we work in the local community alongside professional adult mediators offering a helping hand to the young people struggling with conflict in the local area.

The youth mediators now resolve conflict on the streets and in estates around antisocial behaviour, hate crime and violence. We also get called in to resolve serious conflict in other schools where the dispute has resulted in exclusion. Our role is to mediate with those involved so they can either return to school sooner or make sure the conflict is fully resolved before the pupils return to school after exclusion. Excluded pupils are more likely to end up in crime or joining a gang.

Get involved with YCM and follow our progress!

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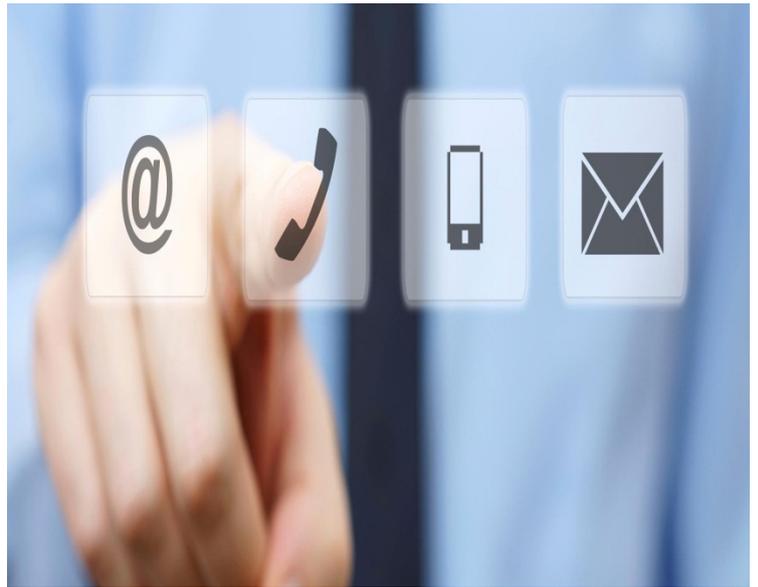
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Get to know our Project Partners

